

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 /086 W

-----190325Z 108684 /70

R 181300Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7146

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAKA S

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CG, XA, MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN REACTION TO BORDER ATTACK ON ZAIRE

REF: STATE 56060

1. AMBASSADOR TOOK OCCASION OF MEETING ON ANOTHER SUBJECT MARCH 17 WITH AMBASSADOR MUCHAMMAD OULD SIDI 'ALI, FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TO SEEK INDICATION OF GIRM ANALYSIS OF AND STANCY ON MILITARY INVASION OF ZAIRE. SIDI 'ALI RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY WITH FOLLOWING STATEMENT OF "GOVERNMENT POLICY": GIRM VERY MUCH REGRETS THAT ZAIRE HAS BEEN VICTIM OF THIS MILITARY AGGRESSION. GIRM HAS CLOSE AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH ZAIRE AND GOZ AND INTENDS TO SUPPORT ZAIRE COMPLETELY WITH ALL ITS (ADMITTEDLY LIMITED) CAPABILITIES. GIRM NOTED APPROVINGLY IMMEDIATE SUPPORT US AND WESTERN EUROPEANS HAD ACCORDED ZAIRE. GIRM, NOTING THAT ANGOLA HAS DENIED ANY INVOLVEMENT IN ZAIRE INVA-
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SION, WISHES TO UNDERSCORE FACT THAT GIRM'S SUPPORT OF ZAIRE SHOULD NOT BE INCORRECTLY CONSTRUED AS OPPOSITION TO ANGOLA. IN SUM, GIRM HOPES AND EXPECTS THAT SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ZAIRE WILL BE RESPECTED BY ALL. SIDI 'ALI ACKNOWLEDGED MURKINESS ENVELOPING ZAIRIAN EVENTS, BUT HAD NO HESITATION IN ENUNCIATING GIRM'S FIRM AND FULL SUPPORT OF GOZ.

2. IN EARLIER DISCUSSIONS (PRIOR TO RETURN OF SIDI 'ALI FROM CAIRO SUMMIT), MORE JUNIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS REVEALED THEY WERE UP-TO-MINUTE ON PRESS REPORTS, BUT CAREFULLY STEERED AWAY FROM MAKING ANY COMMENT. NOTING CONFUSION AND CONFLICT IN REPORTS, JUNIORS DECLARED MINISTRY WANTED TO HAVE CONSIDERABLY MORE AND MORE AUTHORITY INFORMATION ON APPARENT INVASION BEFORE MAKING ANY JUDGMENT, AND HAD ACCORDINGLY REQUESTED DETAILED REPORT FROM GIRM AMBASSADOR IN KINSHASA. ALTHOUGH PARTIALLY OVERTAKEN BY SIDI 'ALI'S POLICY DECLARATION, COMMENTS OF JUNIORS PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO MINISTRY THINKING. SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO FOREIGN MINISTER POINTED WRYLY TO IRONY IN ZAIRIAN SITUATION (AND POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS FOR OAU) IF ZAIRE INVADERS ARE INDEED MERCENARIES COMING FROM OR AIDED BY ANGOLA, GIVEN VIGOROUS EFFORT ANGOLA MADE AT RECENT LOME MEETING TO PUSH THROUGH TOTAL OUTLAWING OF MERCENARIES. ACTING DIVISION DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA OBSERVED REACTION OF NIGERIA WOULD BE BOTH INTERESTING AND KEY, AND PREDICTED THAT NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES MAY NOT REACT UNTIL AFTER LEARNING NIGERIAN POSITION ON ZAIRIAN PROBLEM.

3. GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED DAILY IN MARCH 16 AND 17 NEWS STORIES ON ZAIRE INVASION QUOTED DEPARTMENT OF STATE SPOKESMAN EXTENSIVELY AS PRIMARY SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON SITUATION. MARCH 18 STORY, BASED LARGELY ON AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE WIRE, CHARACTERIZES INVADERS AS EX-KATANGA GENDARMES.
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HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

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